

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 FEA-01 ACDA-07 CIAE-00 INR-07 IO-13  
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 EB-07 NRC-05 OES-06 DODE-00 /067 W  
----- 070042 /63

R 201718Z DEC 76  
FM USMISSION EC BRUSSELS  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2639  
ALL EC CAPITALS 2903  
ERDA WASHINGTON  
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E.O.11652: N/A  
TAGS: ENRG, EEC  
SUBJECT: JET - EUROPEAN FUSION FACILITY

1. BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED. GUIDO BRUNNER, EC COMMISSIONER, ANNOUNCED AT A PRESS CONFERENCE TODAY THAT THE JOINT EUROPEAN TORUS (JET) PROJECT IS IN ITS "DEATH THROES." HE ESTIMATED 10 PERCENT CHANCE OF SURVIVAL. THE RESEARCH COUNCIL WHICH HAD BEEN TENTATIVELY SCHEDULED TO MEET TODAY TO DISCUSS THE SITING OF JET WILL NOT MEET, ACCORDING TO BRUNNER, BECAUSE A PREVIOUS COMMITMENT TO ACCEPT A MAJORITY DECISION ON THE LOCATION "HAS NOT BEEN HONORED BY ONE OF THE MEMBER COUNTRIES." BRUNNER WOULD NOT IDENTIFY THE COUNTRY DIRECTLY, BUT IN ANSWERING A QUESTION AS TO WHETHER IT WAS THE SAME COUNTRY WHICH RECENTLY PROPOSED A SITE OUTSIDE OF THE COMMUNITY, HE SAID YES. (FRANCE RECENTLY PROPOSED CERN IN SWITZERLAND.)

2. CONTRACTS FOR FUSION EXPERTS IN CULHAM EXPIRE DECEMBER 31. HE WILL PROPOSE A THREE-MONTH EXTENSION TO THESE CONTRACTS AND WILL PREPARE A "LIQUIDATION BUDGET" FOR EC COUNCIL ACTION.

3. BRUNNER STATED THAT HE WOULD HAVE CANCELLED THE JET, BUT  
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FELT THAT IT WAS A MATTER FOR COUNCIL DECISION.

4. HE WAS OPTIMISTIC THAT THE MULTI-ANNUAL (1977-80) JOINT RESEARCH CENTER R&D BUDGET WOULD BE APPROVED AT 364 MILLION UNITS OF ACCOUNT. THE DEMISE OF JET SHOULD REMOVE THE "LINK" SOME STATES WERE MAINTAINING BETWEEN A DECISION ON THE JET SITE AND THE JRC

PROGRAM.

5. IN ANSWERING QUESTIONS, BRUNNER SAID HE DID NOT EXPECT ANY EC MEMBER COUNTRY COULD AFFORD TO PICK UP THE JET PROJECT ON ITS OWN. HE DID NOT RULE OUT THE POSSIBILITY OF THIRD-COUNTRY COOPERATION ON A FUSION FACILITY, BUT IN THIS CASE HE WOULD NOT EXPECT IT TO BE A REPLICA OF THE JET. HE SAID HE EXPECTED THAT 12 TO WP OF THE RESEARCHERS IN CULHAM MIGHT BE SEEKING EMPLOYMENT IN THE U.S. FUSION PROGRAM. ASKED IF HE FELT THAT DEMISE OF THE JET WOULD CAUSE EUROPE TO LOSE ITS TECHNOLOGICAL LEAD IN FUSION RESEARCH, HE ANSWERED YES. END UNCLASSIFIED.

6. BEGIN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE. MISSION COMMENT: LOSS OF THE JET PROJECT WOULD REPRESENT A SIGNIFICANT SET-BACK IN WORLDWIDE FUSION RESEARCH AND COULD AFFECT THE TIMEING OF THE COMMERCIAL APPLICATION OF THIS ENERGY SOURCE. THE PROJECT, HOWEVER, IS NOT YET OFFICIALLY TERMINATED. IT IS POSSIBLE THAT MEMBER COUNTRIES WILL BE ABLE TO DISSUADE THE DISSENTER AND THAT BRUNNER'S PRESS CONFERENCE WILL GENERATE PUBLIC PRESSURE TO THAT END. HINTON

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** PRESS COMMENTS, NUCLEAR REACTORS, JET, PROGRAMS (PROJECTS), NUCLEAR POWER PLANTS  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 20 DEC 1976  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** morefirh  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1976ECBRU12548  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** N/A  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Film Number:** D760467-0312  
**From:** EC BRUSSELS  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
**ISecure:** 1  
**Legacy Key:** link1976/newtext/t19761229/aaaaayrn.tel  
**Line Count:** 81  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Office:** ACTION EUR  
**Original Classification:** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 2  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** n/a  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** morefirh  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 06 APR 2004  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <06 APR 2004 by ShawDG>; APPROVED <06 APR 2004 by morefirh>  
**Review Markings:**

Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
04 MAY 2006

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** JET - EUROPEAN FUSION FACILITY  
**TAGS:** ENRG, TECH, EEC  
**To:** STATE ERDA  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006